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TECHNICAL REPORT RD-RE-88-6

SELECTIVE NITRATIONS: LASER-INDUCED NITRATIONS

A. E. Stanley and S. E. Godbey
Research Directorate
Research, Development, and Engineering Center

JANUARY 1989



U.S. ARMY MISSILE COMMAND

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*A National Research Council (NRC) Research Associate.

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19 ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) The Army uses nitrated compounds as explosives and propellants. There is a special need for propellants with the chemical composition necessary to burn exactly with a minimum of side products which create smoke, but with high energy production. An important part of this process is the ability to selectively nitrate materials. Laser-induced chemistry possesses the potential to drive some reactions in an efficient and selective manner. Laser-induced chemistry may be useful in driving nitration reactions toward specific products. Reported herein are the results of several successful attempts to laser-induce the reaction of nitrogen dioxide with hydrocarbons of 3, 4 and 5 carbons. Specifically, the tunable continuous wave infrared laser was used to drive the reaction between nitrogen dioxide, and propane, n-butane, isobutane, and n-pentane. The major products of the reactions were secondary (tertiary in the isobutane reaction) nitrohydrocarbons, of the same chain length as the reacting hydrocarbon. Some short chain nitrated compounds were also identified. The yield of 2-nitrobutane observed in the nitration of butane is approximately 20% based on the depletion					
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of nitrogen dioxide. The propane reacted with nitrogen dioxide to produce mostly 2-nitropropane with a smaller yield of 5-9%. The analogous reaction of pentane produced approximately 9% of the major product which is believed to be 2-nitropentane. The isobutane nitration resulted in approximately a 10% yield of 2-methyl-2-nitropropane. The results of these laser-induced reactions are contrasted to the corresponding thermal reactions. The reaction mechanism is also discussed for these two processes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Appreciation is extended to Dr. V. F. Kalasinsky of Mississippi State University for providing the samples of isobutane and t-butyl nitrite. We would also like to acknowledge the Chemistry Department of the University of Alabama in Huntsville, for assistance in recording the NMR spectrum of 2-nitrobutane.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. EXPERIMENTAL	1
III. RESULTS	2
A. Propane/ NO_2	3
B. n-Butane/ NO_2	3
C. n-Pentane/ NO_2	4
D. Isobutane/ NO_2	4
IV. CONCLUSION	5
REFERENCES	33

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Gas phase mid-infrared spectra in the 1100-900 cm^{-1} region	7
2	Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of propane/ NO_2 mixtures before irradiation and the products resulting from laser excitation	8
3	Gas phase infrared spectra of hydrocarbon/ NO_2 mixtures and the products resulting from laser excitation	9
4	Gas chromatograms from the analysis of product mixes produced by the CO_2 laser excitation of hydrocarbon/ NO_2 mixtures under the following conditions	10
5	Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of butane/ NO_2 mixtures before excitation and products resulting from the CO_2 laser excitation of this mixture	11
6	Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of pentane/ NO_2 mixtures before excitation and the products formed by the CO_2 laser excitation of this mixture	12
7	Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of isobutane/ NO_2 mixtures before excitation and products resulting from the CO_2 laser excitation of this mixture	13
8	Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of t-butylnitrite/isobutane mixtures before excitation and the products formed by the CO_2 laser excitation of this mixture	14

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Frequencies (cm ⁻¹)* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Propane and NO ₂	15
2	Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of Propane with NO ₂	17
3	Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of Butane with NO ₂	18
4	Frequencies (cm ⁻¹)* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Butane and NO ₂	19
5	Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of n-Pentane with NO ₂	22
6	Frequencies (cm ⁻¹)* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Pentane and NO ₂	23
7	Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of Isobutane with NO ₂	25
8	Frequencies (cm ⁻¹) and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Isobutane and NO ₂	26
9	Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Decomposition of t-butyl nitrite Using Isobutane as a Sensitizer*	28
10	Frequencies (cm ⁻¹) and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Decomposition of t-butyl nitrite Using Isobutane as a Sensitizer	29
11	Comparison of Nitroalkane Products from Laser-Induced Nitrations to Thermally-Induced ²² Nitrations	31

I. INTRODUCTION

Most of the nitrated compounds used by the Army are explosives and propellants. Current nitration methods often result in low yields of desired products and complex mixtures of reaction products. Laser-induced chemistry shows the promise of being an efficient and selective procedure. In this study, it is intended to use a continuous wave (CW), carbon dioxide (CO₂) laser to drive the nitration of several hydrocarbons (C₃, C₄, and C₅) by nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

Traditionally, nitration of paraffins is difficult to accomplish. High temperature (200 - 400 °C) and high pressure (8-12 atmospheres) reactors are used with some success in the commercial production of nitroalkanes [1]. However, new methods are continually sought which will increase the currently low yields of nitroparaffins and minimize the troublesome side reactions. Efficient control over which nitroalkanes are produced (selective nitration) in these processes is also desirable.

Recently, Umstead, et al. reported the photonitration of isobutane by nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) using an argon-ion laser as the excitation source [2,3]. The NO₂ absorbs the radiation and then, according to the kinetic modeling [3], the vibronically excited NO₂ (NO₂*_v) achieves the direct abstraction of a hydrogen atom from the isobutane. The resulting free radical reacts primarily with NO₂ to form 2-methyl-2-nitropropane. However, the yield of 2-methyl-2-nitropropane based on isobutane was low (about 2.6 percent) and product fragmentation was reported to be significant.

II. EXPERIMENTAL

Samples of propane, n-butane, n-pentane, nitromethane, nitroethane, 1-nitropropane, 2-nitropropane, 2-methyl-2-nitropropane, 1-nitrobutane, 1-nitropentane, and nitrogen dioxide were obtained from Aldrich Chemical Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The samples were of 98 percent or greater stated purity except for 2-nitropropane which was 94 percent stated purity. The isobutane and t-butyl nitrite samples were provided by V. F. Kalasinsky. The purity of the samples was monitored using gas chromatography-mass spectroscopy (GC-MS) and the infrared spectra were compared to published spectra where literature spectra were available [4-10]. No further purification of these compounds was undertaken with the exception of nitrogen dioxide which was purified by trap-to-trap separation at -78.5 °C. All compounds were degassed at -196.8 °C.

A stainless steel cell of exterior dimensions 5x5x10 cm was used to hold reactants during irradiation. This cell was equipped with zinc selenide windows on the long path through which the laser was directed and KRS-5 or KCl windows on the short path for collecting the infrared spectra of reactions and products. The optical pathlength of the long path was 10.5 cm while the short optical pathlength was 5 cm.

The infrared spectra were recorded on a Bomem DA3.002 interferometer equipped with a vacuum bench and having a deuterated TGS detector and a KBr beamsplitter. The effective resolution was 1 cm^{-1} and 32 scans were taken for each sample and reference. A medium apodization function [11] was used.

The initial sample pressures were measured using an MKS Baratron electronic manometer, consisting of a type 222B transducer and a type PDR-5B digital readout power supply.

A Coherent Radiation model 41 CW, CO_2 tunable laser provided the energy to drive the reactions, and was operated in a single mode at various selected wavelengths and powers. The wavelength was verified using an Optical Engineering CO_2 spectrum analyzer. The powers were measured by a Coherent Radiation model 213 water-cooled power meter.

The reaction cell was positioned on a movable stage which could be translated along the laser path. All samples were irradiated with the cell positioned behind the focal point where the beam was slightly diverging. The zinc selenide window allowed a beam transmittance of about 70 percent through to the sample. The reported powers of laser fluences do not correct for this window absorption nor the difference in beam diameter at the sample versus at the power meter where the beam is larger. The beam diameter was approximately 2 mm at the point of entry to the reaction cell.

The separation and analysis of reaction product were accomplished partly by using a Hewlett Packard (HP) 5890 gas chromatograph equipped with a gas sampling loop and interfaced to a HP 5970 series mass selective detector. The chromatographic column identified was an HP Ultra 2 (crosslinked 5 percent phenyl methyl silicone) of about 40 m length having 0.2 mm interior diameter and 0.33 micrometer film thickness. The volumetric flow rate was $\sim 1.6\text{ cm}^3/\text{min}$ (linear flow rate $\sim 10\text{ m/min}$); the split ratio was $\sim 47:1$ and the column head pressure was 10 psi. The instrument response to each commercially available nitroparaffin was estimated by filling the reaction cell with known pressures of the pure compounds and sampling into the gas sampling loop. The responses versus initial pressure of the components were plotted to give a calibration curve for each component. The nitroalkanes which were not available to use as standards, namely 2-nitrobutane, 1-nitro-2-methylpropane, 2-nitropentane, and 3-nitropentane, were treated as having approximately the same instrument response as 1-nitrobutane. The separation of some highly volatile components was not possible with the chromatographic conditions used.

III. RESULTS

The intent of this project was to laser-induce the reactions of nitrogen dioxide or nitric acid with hydrocarbons of 3, 4 or 5 carbons. The laser used in this initial study was a carbon dioxide infrared laser which can be set on a frequency resonant with a vibrational frequency of the hydrocarbon reactant. A sensitizer such as sulfur hexafluoride can be used if necessary to drive the reaction. With special attention to details such as the absorption spectra of the nitration products, our expectation was to select excitation conditions which increase the yield of specific desired products and minimize product decomposition.

A. Propane/ NO_2

The infrared spectrum of propane in the 1100-900 cm^{-1} region (Fig. 1A) revealed two vibrational bands that are accessible by the output of the CO_2 laser. Of these, the one centered at 923 cm^{-1} is slightly stronger and was chosen for use in this initial study. Two regions on this band seemed particularly suited for irradiation by a CO_2 laser. The first is in the region of the Q branch which is a good match to the P(40) line of the (00^1-10^0) transition at 925 cm^{-1} [12]. The other is the P(30) component of this same CO_2 laser band at 935 cm^{-1} which corresponds approximately to the maximum point on the R branch of the propane spectrum. Higher laser powers were possible with the P(30) line but the higher relative absorptivity of the propane Q branch to the R branch makes the P(40) line the better choice. The nitration of propane was difficult using either line. However, utilizing the P(40) line at a power of 82 W/cm^2 , the nitration of propane was more successful. A propane pressure of 470 torr and an irradiation time of 60 sec resulted in the conversion of ~ 15 percent of the NO_2 , an initial pressure, 30 torr, to nitroparaffins. The yield of the major product, 2-nitropropane, was about 5 percent (see Table 1). The nitrated products, 2-nitropropane, 1-nitropropane, nitromethane, and nitroethane, were readily identified by comparison of their retention times and mass spectra to those of known compounds. However, the more volatile reaction products were not well separated in the gas chromatograms. The infrared spectrum of products as shown in Figure 2 and tabulated in Table 1, allowed identification of NO , CO_2 , CO , and H_2O [13]. The region of the infrared spectrum of reactants and products used to identify NO , CO , and CO_2 can be seen in Figure 3.A(2). A higher pressure of propane (550 torr with remaining conditions the same as above) resulted in a higher yield of nitrated products (~ 22 percent) and a higher yield of the primary product, 2-nitropropane (~ 9 percent). The chromatogram of this product mixture is shown in Figure 4A and summarized in Table 2. Irradiation at the P(30) frequency resulted in lower yields of nitrated products, even at higher laser powers up to 100 W/cm^2 , the highest power attempted for this compound.

B. n-Butane/ NO_2

The overlapping bands near 960 cm^{-1} in the infrared spectrum of butane (Figure 1B) are accessible by the output of the CO_2 laser. The P(6) line [12] of the (00^1-10^0) at 956.1857 cm^{-1} was chosen for this experiment since it coincides with the Q branch near 956 cm^{-1} in the butane spectrum. About 40 percent of the NO_2 was converted to nitroparaffins when a mixture of 220 torr butane and 20 torr NO_2 was irradiated for 30 sec with 75 W/cm^2 laser power. Approximately half of the total nitroparaffin yield arises from one component which is thought to be 2-nitrobutane based upon its mass spectrum and its retention time, 11.49 min (Fig. 4 and Table 3). This is longer than the retention time of 1-nitropropane (10.10 min) and shorter than the 1-nitrobutane retention time (12.930 min). We were unable to obtain 2-nitrobutane commercially to confirm the identify of this component. However, we were able to synthesize 2-nitrobutane from the oxidation of 2-aminobutane. The major product of this oxidation was identical in retention time and mass spectrum to the major product of the laser-induced nitration of butane. The proton nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrum of the product of the amine oxidation confirmed its identity as 2-nitrobutane. The remaining nitrated paraffins produced are nitroethane, nitromethane, 1-nitrobutane, and 1-nitropropane, in order of abundance. 2-nitropropane was not detected in the

nitration products. More nitroethane was produced than nitromethane. This is the reverse of what was found in the propane reaction. The products identified from the infrared, (Fig. 3B and 5 and Table 4) were NO, CO, CO₂ and H₂O. More CO seems to be present in the butane reaction products relative to the propane products.

C. n-Pentane/NO₂

The choice of a frequency for use in the laser-induced reaction of n-pentane with NO₂ was a compromise between the absorptivity of the bands in the infrared spectrum of n-pentane and the output power obtainable from the CO₂ laser in this region. The P(40) line of the (00°1-10°0) transition of the CO₂ laser was satisfactory for our purpose. The laser-induced nitration of n-pentane was accomplished under conditions comparable to the butane experiments, that is, 220 torr pentane, 20 torr NO₂, 75 W/cm² laser power, and 30 sec irradiation time. A rough estimate of the total yield of nitrated paraffins is ~ 23 percent and of the major nitrated product ~ 9 percent. The primary product is probably 2-nitropentane, with about half as much 3-nitropentane being formed. This is a reasonable result, as both are secondary nitroparaffins and would be expected to be about equally favored as products. However, there are two equivalent positions on the n-pentane molecule which can be nitrated to yield 2-nitropentane, but only one which yields 3-nitropentane. The remaining nitroalkanes identified in the reaction products were, in order of abundance, nitroethane, 1-nitropropane, and 1-nitropentane. An impurity present in the pentane sample, cyclopentane, obscures the chromatographic peak of nitromethane (Fig. 4 and results tabulated in Table 5). It is likely that some of this compound was formed as well. It is again, as in the butane results, interesting to note the absence of particular nitrated products. No 2-nitropropane, 1-nitrobutane, or 2-nitrobutane were detected. The infrared spectrum, (Fig. 3C and 6, with results tabulated in Table 6), was again useful for identifying NO, CO, CO₂, and H₂O in the product mixture. The amount of CO present in the product mixture seems to be less in pentane, than in butane, (Fig. 3).

D. Isobutane/NO₂

The P(40) line of the (00°1-10°0) band of the CO₂ laser was chosen for the isobutane/NO₂ irradiation. The frequency of this transition (924.9749 cm⁻¹) corresponds to a point on the only band of the isobutane molecule which is reasonably accessible to the output of the CO₂ laser. The laser-induced nitration of isobutane was accomplished under the following conditions: isobutane pressure, 350 torr; NO₂ pressure, 25 torr; laser power, 100 W/cm²; and irradiation time, 60 sec. The major nitroalkane produced was 2-methyl-2-nitropropane, with a yield of 10 percent estimated for this component. The total yield of nitroalkanes was approximately 23 percent (see Table 7). Nitromethane and 2-nitropropane have also been identified from the reaction products. Also, another nitroalkane having four carbons is produced and elutes after 2-methyl-2-nitropropane. The retention time and mass spectrum of this component are close to the same as the product identified in the butane nitration as 2-nitrobutane. However, it is unlikely that this is the product since rearrangement from a branched chain to a straight chain hydrocarbon is not expected. The mass spectra of nitrobutanes and nitromethylpropanes are very similar. Also, it is possible that the retention

times of 2-nitrobutane and 1-nitro-2-methylpropane are approximately the same under the chromatographic conditions utilized. For the present this product can only be questionably identified as 1-nitro-2-methylpropane.

Also identified in the GC-MS analysis of products were significant amounts of acetone and 2-methylpropane, and a smaller amount of 1-propene. The infrared spectrum (Fig. 7 and Table 8) of the products allowed identification of CO, CO₂, NO, and H₂O as well.

The pressure of the acetone in the product mixture prompted an interest in the decomposition of t-butyl nitrite as the likely precursor of this product. The laser-induced decomposition of t-butyl nitrite was accomplished using isobutane as the sensitizer to absorb the CO₂ laser output and transfer the energy to the t-butyl nitrite. The conditions employed were: isobutane pressure, 300 torr; t-butyl nitrite, 11 torr; laser line, P(40) of (00⁰1)-(10⁰0) band; laser power, 100 W/cm²; irradiation time, 60 sec. The products which have been identified include acetone, 2-methylpropene, methane, 1-propene, and NO (see Figure 8 and Tables 9 and 10).

IV. CONCLUSION:

The CO₂ infrared laser-induced nitrations of propane, n-butane, isobutane, and n-pentane with NO₂ were successful. The products were found to be primarily secondary or tertiary nitroalkanes of the same chain length with smaller amounts of primary nitroalkanes and shorter chain nitroalkanes. The thermally-induced reaction between alkanes and NO₂ is described as proceeding via a free radical mechanism [1]. This should hold true when the excitation is provided by a laser. The primary reaction steps are thought to be



and



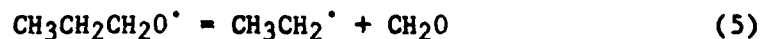
in the thermally-induced nitration of hydrocarbons, RH, using NO₂. An important side reaction is

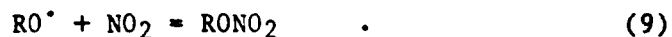
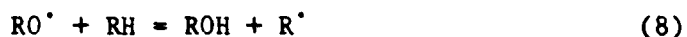
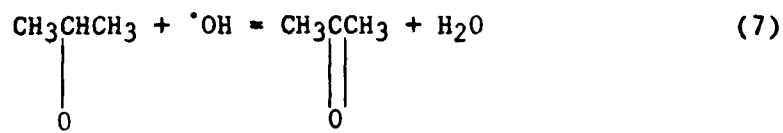
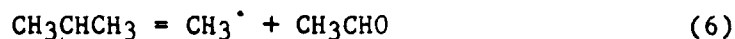


in which an unstable alkyl nitrite, RONO, is formed. The alkyl nitrite decomposes as follows:



although at conditions usually employed for nitrating hydrocarbons with NO₂, some of the alkyl nitrite might not decompose. The alkoxy radical, RO[·], produced in reaction (4), may undergo any of a number of reactions, including the following, using propyl radicals as examples:





The continued oxidation of aldehydes, ketones, alcohols, etc. produces acids, oxides of carbons, water, etc. The alkyl radicals formed in reactions (5), (6), and (8) could react with NO_2 to form lower molecular weight nitroalkanes. Alkyl radicals can also decompose directly to form lower molecular weight alkyl radicals which could react with NO_2 to form shorter chain nitroalkanes [21].

The specific products formed in the laser-induced nitrations are consistent with those reported from thermal nitrations [22]. For a comparison, see Table 11. Differences in conditions, such as the temperatures, pressures, ratio of hydrocarbon to nitrating agent, and nitrating reagent, (HNO_3 , in the thermal nitrations used for comparison), make quantitative comparisons unreliable. Further, a large experimental uncertainty is associated with our results, whenever known compounds are not available. Despite these drawbacks, the relative amounts of nitroalkanes produced in the propane irradiation fall within the range produced in the thermal nitrations at 505-10 °C and 790-5 °C. The butane results are close to the results from thermal studies as well. The pentane shows some differences. No 1-nitrobutane was detected in our product mixture, whereas the thermal reaction reported that 12.8 mole percent 1-nitrobutane was produced. The laser-induced nitration yielded about twice as much 2-nitropentane as 3-nitropentane. It is difficult to understand how 3-nitropentane could be produced at higher yields in the thermal reaction than 2-nitropentane. Both positions must arise from secondary alkyl radicals which should be roughly equivalent in stability. However, there are two equivalent positions on pentane which can yield 2-nitropentane, a fact which cannot be overcome by changing conditions. The results from the laser-induced reactions are very similar to the thermal results. The yields of nitrated products are promising. Further work is planned to optimize conditions and improve these results. The kinetics of these systems is of interest and plans are underway for modeling the reactions.

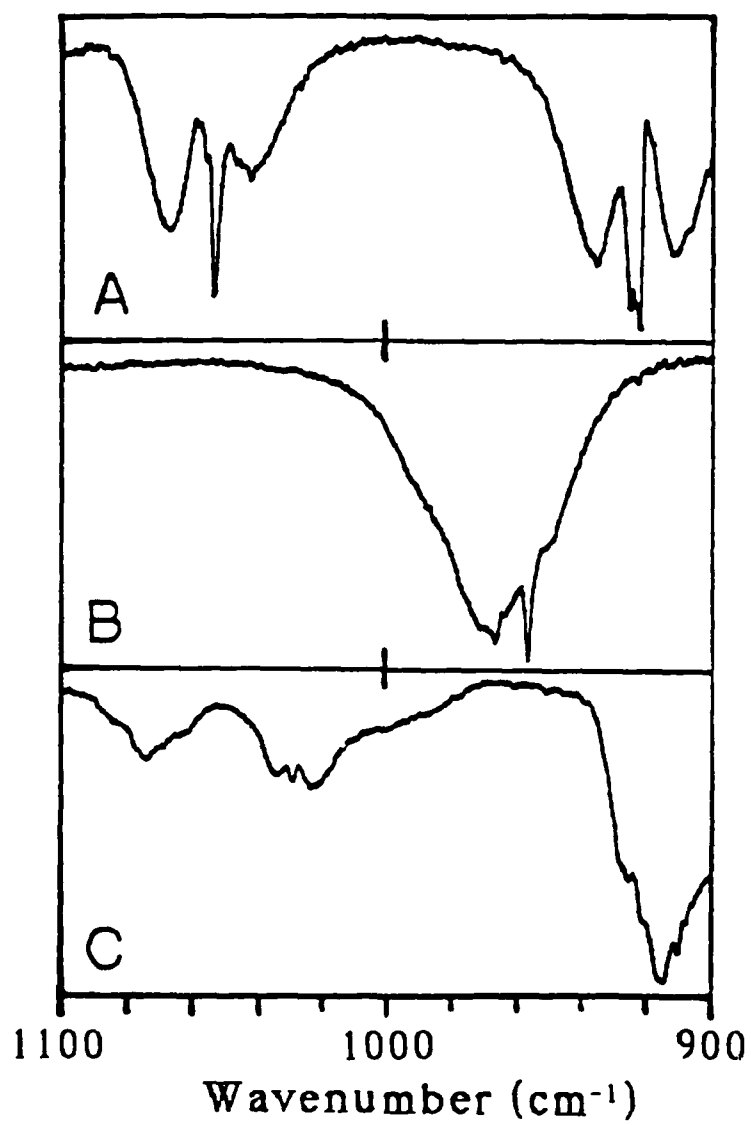


Figure 1. Gas phase-infrared spectra in the 1100-cm⁻¹ region.

- A. Propane, 200 torr
- B. n-butane, 200 torr
- C. n-pentane, 200 torr

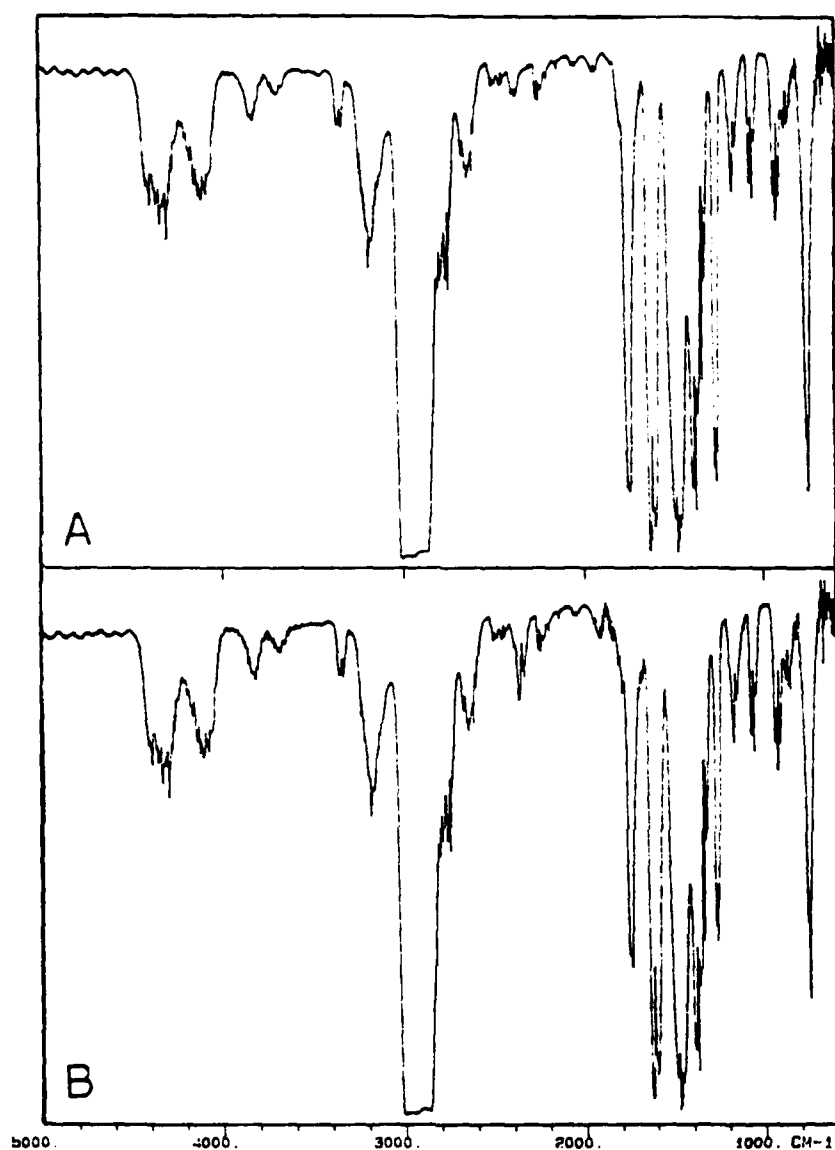


Figure 2. Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of propane/NO₂ mixtures before irradiation and the products resulting from laser excitation.

- A. Spectra of 470 torr propane and 30 torr NO₂
- B. Spectra of products after CO₂ laser excitation of the mixture in Fig. 2A using the following conditions: P(40) of (00⁰1-10⁰0), 924.9749 cm⁻¹; 60 sec; and 82 W/cm².

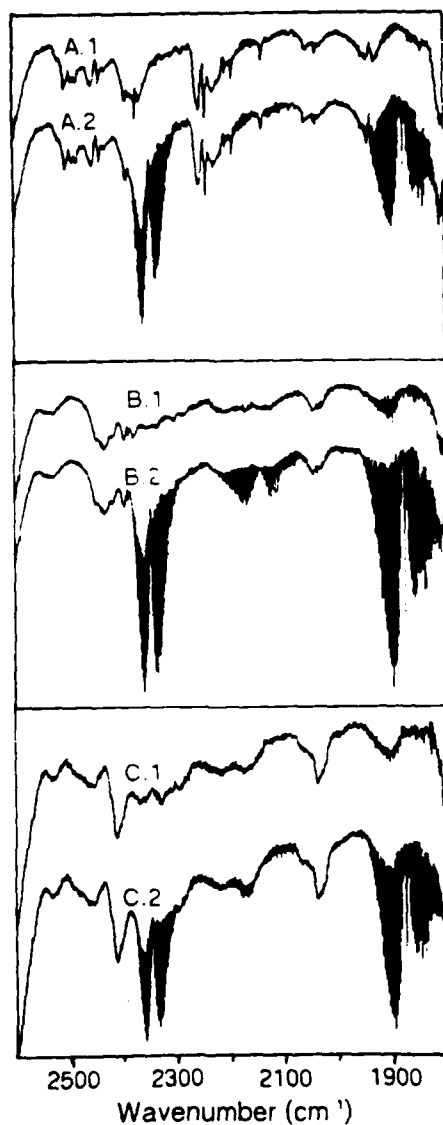


Figure 3. Gas phase infrared spectra of hydrocarbon/ NO_2 mixtures and the products resulting from laser excitation.

- A.1 Spectra of propane, 470 torr, and NO_2 , 30 torr
- A.2 Spectra of products formed by CO_2 laser excitation of the mixture described in Fig. 3A.1 under the following conditions: P(40) of $(0001-10^00)$, 924.9749 cm^{-1} ; 60 sec; and 82 W/cm^2 .
- B.1 Spectra of n-butane, 220 torr, and NO_2 , 20 torr
- B.2 Spectra of product formed by CO_2 laser excitation of the mixture described in Fig. 3B.1 under the following conditions: P(6) of (00^01-10^00) , 956.1857 cm^{-1} ; 30 sec; and 75 W/cm^2 .
- C.1 Spectra of n-pentane, 200 torr, and NO_2 , 20 torr
- C.2 Spectra of products formed by CO_2 laser excitation of the mixture described in 3C.1 under the following conditions: P(40) of (00^01-10^00) , 924.9749 cm^{-1} ; 30 sec; and 75 W/cm^2 .

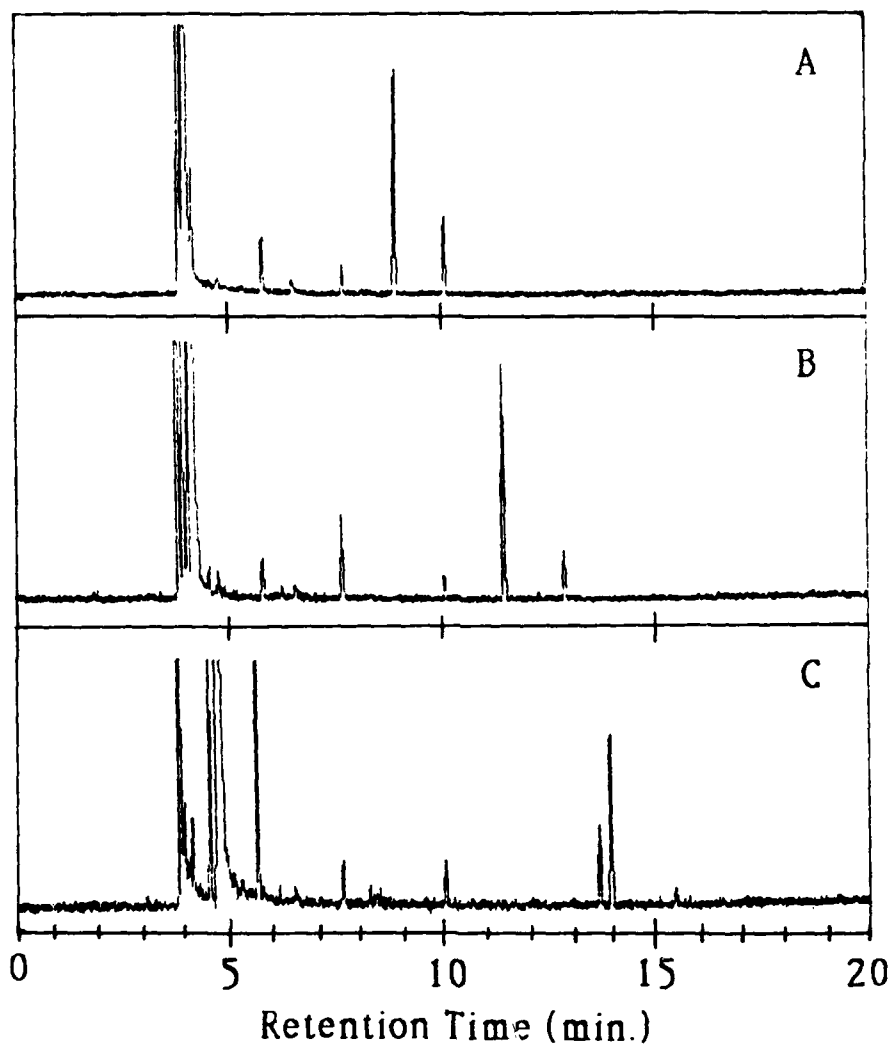


Figure 4. Gas chromatograms from the analysis of product mixes produced by the CO_2 laser excitation of hydrocarbon/ NO_2 mixtures under the following conditions:

- A. Propane, 550 torr, NO_2 , 30 torr: P(40) of $(00^0_1-10^0_0)$, 924.9749 cm^{-1} ; 60 sec; and 82 W/cm^2 .
- B. n-butane, 220 torr, NO_2 , 20 torr: P(6) of $(00^0_1-10^0_0)$, 956.1857 cm^{-1} ; 30 sec; and 75 W/cm^2 .
- C. n-pentane, 200 torr, NO_2 , 20 torr: P(40) of $(00^0_1-10^0_0)$, 924.9749 cm^{-1} ; 30 sec; and 75 W/cm^2 .

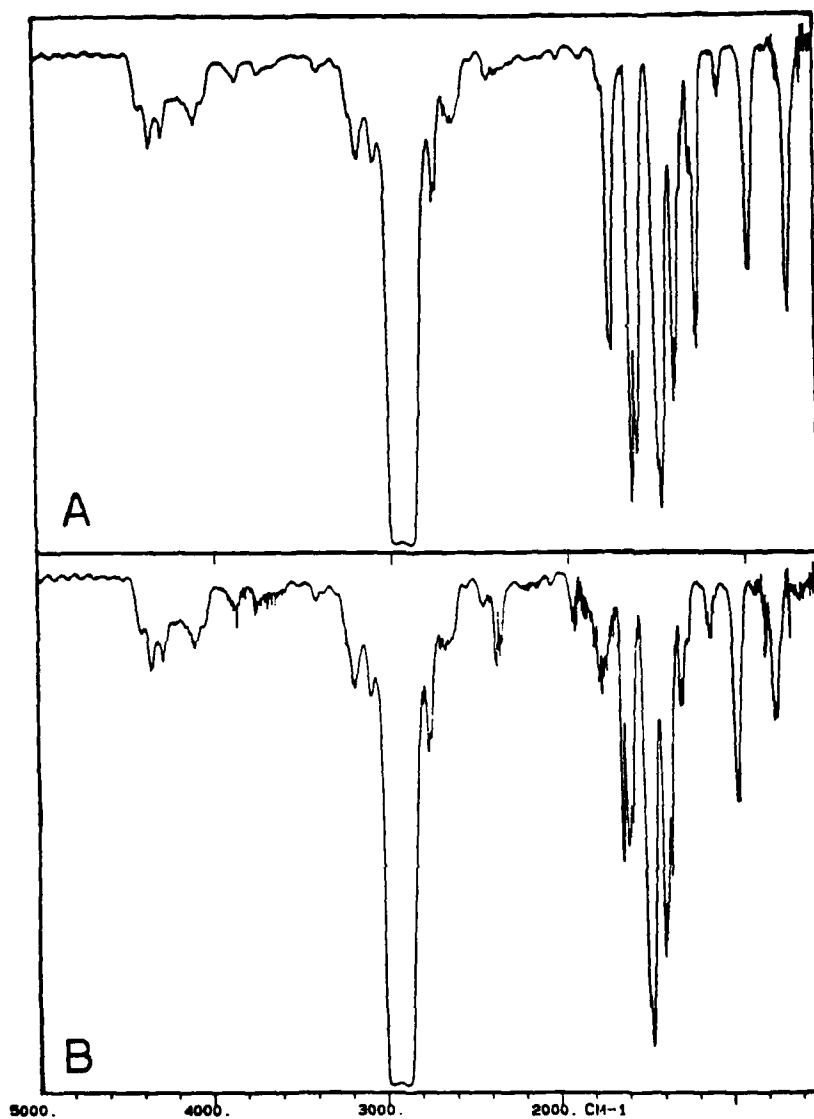


Figure 5. Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of butane/ NO_2 mixtures before excitation and products resulting from the CO_2 laser excitation of this mixture.

- A. Spectra of n-butane, 220 torr, and NO_2 , 20 torr.
- B. Spectra of products formed from the CO_2 laser excitation of the mixture in 5A under the following conditions: P(6) of $(00^0 1-10^0 0)$, 956.1857 cm^{-1} ; 30 sec; and 75 W/cm^2 .

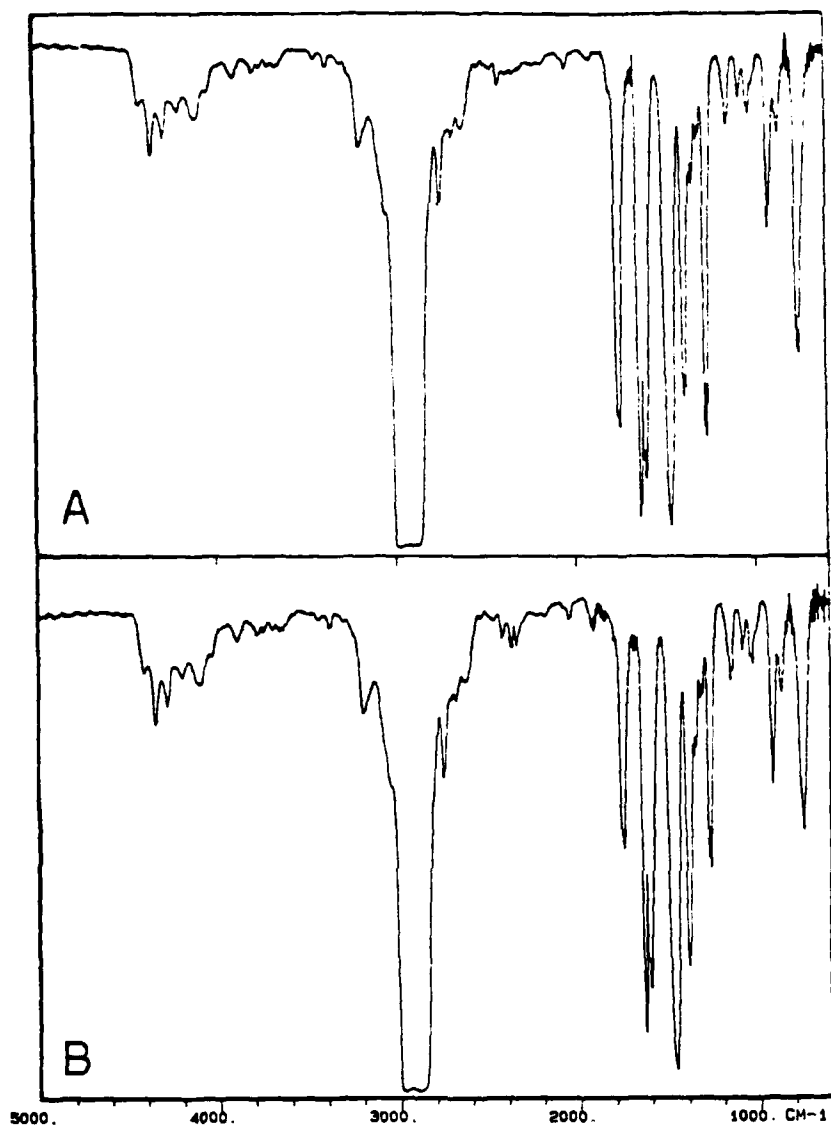


Figure 6. Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of pentane/NO₂ mixtures before excitation and the products formed by the CO₂ laser excitation of this mixture.

- A. Spectra of n-pentane, 220 torr, and NO₂, 20 torr.
- B. Spectra of products formed by the CO₂ laser excitation of the mixture in 6A under the following conditions: P(40) of (00⁰1-10⁰0), 924.9749 cm⁻¹; 30 sec; and 75 W/cm².

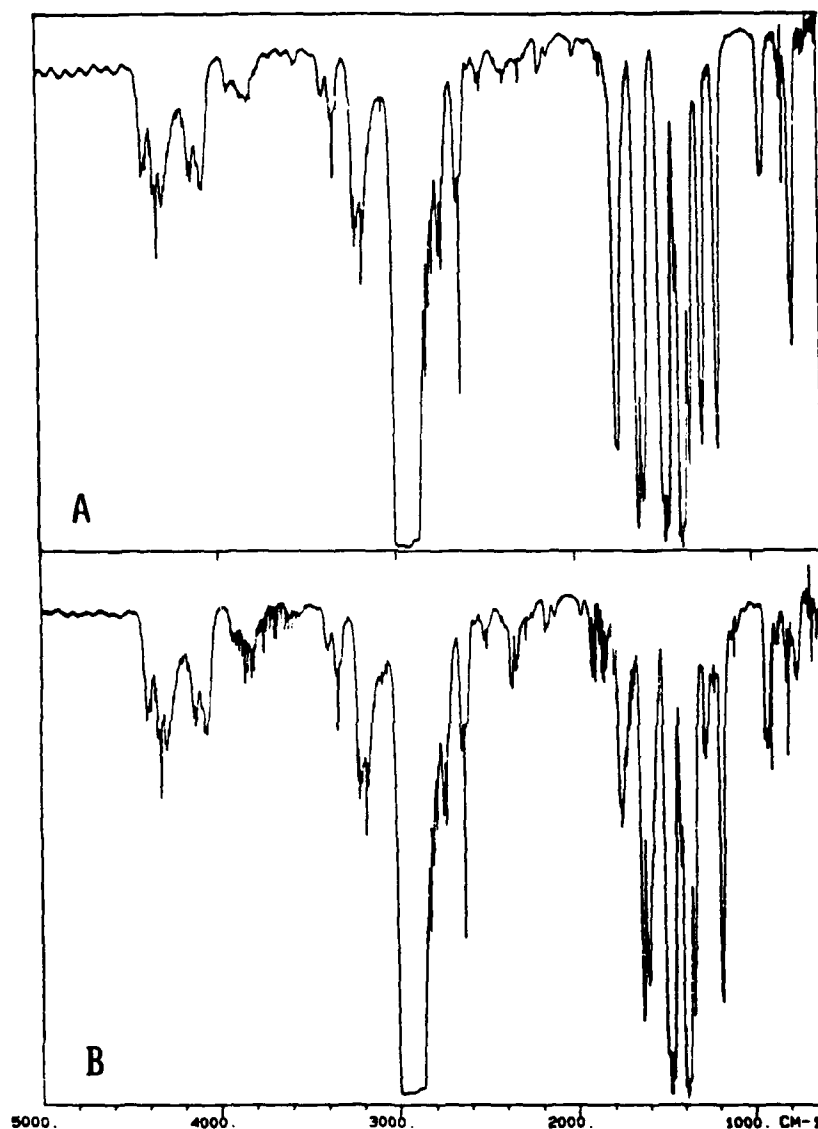


Figure 7. Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of isobutane/ NO_2 mixtures before excitation and products resulting from the CO_2 laser excitation of this mixture.

- A. Spectra of isobutane, 350 torr, and NO_2 , 25 torr.
- B. Spectra of products formed from the CO_2 laser excitation of the mixture in 7A under the following conditions: $P(40)$ of $(00^0_1-10^0_0)$, 924.9749 cm^{-1} ; 60 sec; and 100 W/cm^2 .

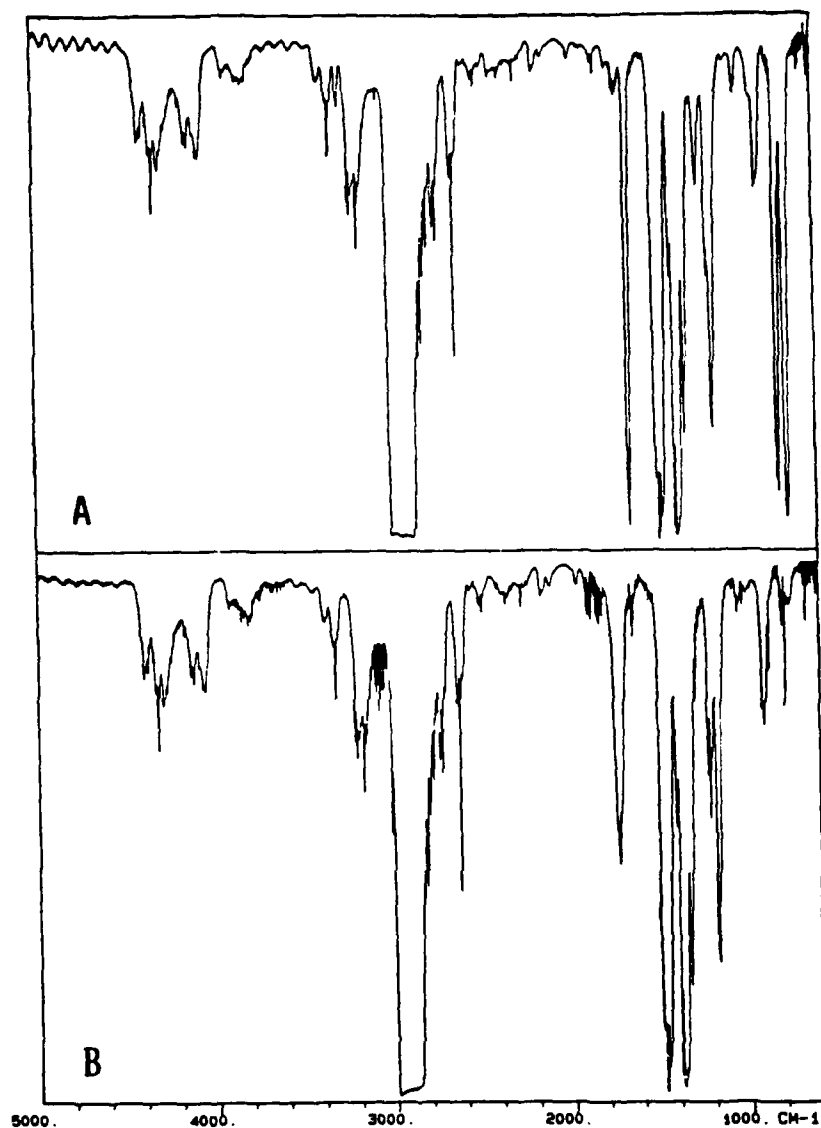


Figure 8. Gas phase mid-infrared spectra of t-butyl nitrite/isobutane mixtures before excitation and the products forms by the CO₂ laser excitation of this mixture.

- A. Spectra of t-butyl nitrite, 11 torr, and isobutane, 300 torr.
- B. Spectra of products formed by the CO₂ laser excitation of the mixture in 6A under the following conditions: P(40) of (00⁰1-10⁰0), 924.9749 cm⁻¹, 60 sec; and 100 W/cm².

TABLE 1. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands
Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Propane and NO_2

Propane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
3343-3186		3344-3186	3343-3186	Propane	
Offscale	2918	Offscale	Offscale		
Offscale	2890	Offscale	Offscale		
2828-2374		2828-2374	2828-2374	Propane	
			2348	CO_2	14
2243-2193		2242-2193	2243-2193	Propane	
2138		2138	2138	Propane	
			2128-2103	CO	14
2038		2039	2038	Propane	
1938		1938	1938	Propane	
			1876	NO	15
	1750	1750	1750	N_2O_4	16
	1617	1617	1617	NO_2	8
1472		1471	1472	Propane	4
1394		1394	1394	Propane	4
1376		1376	1376	Propane	4
1338		1337	1338	Propane	4
	1261	1261	1261	N_2O_4	16
1191		1190	1190	Propane	4
1158		1158	1158	Propane	4
1053		1053	1053	Propane	4
922		925	925	Propane	4

TABLE 1. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Propane and NO_2
(cont'd)

Propane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
869		869	869	Propane	4
	758	757		NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
	755	755		NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
	750	750	750	NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
748	747	748	748	NO_2 , N_2O_4	4,8,16
				Propane	

* Only fundamentals and major bands in the region from $3500\text{--}500\text{ cm}^{-1}$ are listed.

TABLE 2. Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of Propane with NO₂.

Retention Time	Area	Area %	Ratio %	Probable Identification	Amount Torr*
3.921	9145594	2.03	2.12	More than 1 component	---
4.018	4.310E8	95.78	100.00	Propane	---
4.227	3090683	0.69	0.72	Butane ?	---
4.774	212605	0.05	0.05	??	---
4.831	334010	0.07	0.08	??	---
5.372	314391	0.07	0.07	??	---
5.840	781757	0.17	0.18	Nitromethane	1.5
6.550	314698	0.07	0.07	??	---
7.688	501706	0.11	0.12	Nitroethane	0.8
8.922	3268045	0.73	0.76	2-nitropropane	1.7
10.10	1040723	0.23	0.24	1-nitropropane	0.7

* Conditions employed in this reaction were: propane pressure, 470 torr; NO₂ pressure, 30 torr; laser line, P(40) of (00⁰1-10⁰0); laser power, 82 W/cm²; irradiation time, 60 sec. The estimated amounts of nitroparaffin products are based on calibration of the instrument response when known pressures of these component were placed in the reaction cell and injected through the gas sampling loop.

TABLE 3. Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of Butane with NO₂.

Retention Time	Area	Area %	Ratio %	Probable Identification	Amount Torr*
3.916	11882909	3.14	3.44	More than 1 component	---
4.027	4948455	1.31	1.44	Butane impurity	---
4.095	504639	0.13	0.15	??	---
4.147	4432754	1.17	1.28	??	---
4.242	3.459E8	91.27	100.00	Butane	---
4.621	861449	0.23	0.25	??	---
4.835	666027	0.18	0.19	??	---
5.836	892597	0.24	0.26	Nitromethane	1.1
6.605	178691	0.05	0.05	??	---
7.681	1782231	0.47	0.52	Nitroethane	1.4
10.10	556120	0.15	0.16	1-nitropropane	0.5
11.49	4668849	1.23	1.35	2-nitrobutane	4.0
12.93	1032901	0.27	0.30	1-nitrobutane	0.9

* Conditions employed in this reaction were: n-butane pressure, 220 torr; NO₂ pressure, 20 torr; laser line, P(6) of (00⁰1-10⁰0); laser power, 75 W/cm²; irradiation time, 30 sec. The estimated amounts of nitroparaffin products, except 2-nitrobutane, were based on calibration of the instrument response when known pressures of these compounds were placed in the reaction cell and injected through the gas sampling loop. The pressure of 2-nitrobutane produced is estimated based on the calibration of 1-nitrobutane.

TABLE 4. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands
Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Butane and NO_2

Butane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
3291-3085		3293-3087	3297-3085	Butane	
Offscale	2918	Offscale	Offscale		
Offscale	2890	Offscale	Offscale		
			2817		
			2815		
			2812		
			2810		
			2807		
			2805		
			2803		
			2802		
			2797		
2795		2794	2794	Butane	
			2790		
			2787		
			2784		
			2781		
			2779		
			2775		
			2773		
			2770		
			2766		
			2764		
			2761		

TABLE 4. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands
Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Butane and NO_2
(cont'd)

Butane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
			2759		
			2755		
			2753		
			2752		
2743		2743	2742	Butane	
2682		2682	2683	Butane	
			2668		
2654-2389		2653-2389	2652-2390	Butane	
			2348	CO_2	14
			2143	CO	14
2033		2037	2037	Butane	
1902		1900	1900	Butane	
			1876	NO	15
	1750	1750	1746	N_2O_4	16
	1617	1617	1617	NO_2	8
			1570	Nitroalkanes	5-7
1471		1471	1471	Butane	4
1466		1466	1466	Butane	4
1462		1462	1462	Butane	4
1383		1383	1383	Butane	4
			1351	KNO_3 on windows	17

TABLE 4. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Butane and NO_2 (cont'd)

Butane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
1344		1344	1344	Butane	4
1294		1295	1295	Butane	4
	1261	1261	1264	N_2O_4	16
1135		1135	1135	Butane	4
			1105		
			1076		
957		957	957	Butane	4
	758	758		N_2O_4 , NO_2	8,16
	755	755		N_2O_4 , NO_2	8,16
	750	750		N_2O_4 , NO_2	8,16
747	747	748	747	Butane, NO_2 , N_2O_4	4,8,16
733		733	733	Butane	4

*Only fundamentals and major bands in the region from 3500-500 cm^{-1} are listed.

TABLE 5. Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of n-Pentane with NO₂.

Retention Time	Area	Area %	Ratio %	Probable Identification	Amount Torr*
3.905	5002700	1.25	1.34	More than 1 component	---
4.010	1404895	0.35	0.38	Pentane impurity plus?	---
4.075	408476	0.10	0.11	Pentane impurity plus?	---
4.129	491759	0.12	0.13	Pentane impurity plus?	---
4.203	1288258	0.33	0.34	Pentane impurity plus?	---
4.605	3178313	0.80	0.85	Pentane impurity plus?	---
4.792	3.7409E8	94.40	100.00	Pentane	---
4.887	1220945	0.31	0.33	??	---
5.134	279689	0.07	0.07	??	---
5.181	382545	0.10	0.10	??	---
5.684	3496246	0.88	0.93	Pentane impurity	---
7.663	528792	0.13	0.14	Nitroethane	0.8
8.274	226095	0.06	0.06	??	---
10.08	587932	0.15	0.16	1-nitropropane	0.5
13.69	993117	0.25	0.27	3-nitropentane	0.9
13.98	2070157	0.52	0.55	2-nitropentane	1.9
15.49	248895	0.06	0.07	1-nitropentane	0.6

* Conditions employed in this reaction were: n-pentane pressure, 220 torr; NO₂ pressure, 20 torr; laser line, P(40) of (00⁰1-10⁰0); laser power, 75 W/cm²; irradiation time, 30 sec. The estimated amounts of nitroparaffin products, except 2-nitropentane and 3-nitropentane, are based on calibration of the instrument response when known pressures of these components were placed in the reaction cell and injected through the gas sampling loop. The pressures of 2-nitropentane and 3-nitropentane produced is estimated based on the calibration of 1-nitropentane.

TABLE 6. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands
Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Pentane and NO_2

Pentane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
3375		3375	3378	Pentane	
3190		3191	3190	Pentane	
Offscale	2918	Offscale	Offscale		
Offscale	2890	Offscale	Offscale		
			2781		
			2779		
			2766		
2749-2415		2749-2414	2749-2415	Pentane	
			2348	CO_2	14
			2259-2086	CO	14
2041		2041	2040	Pentane	
1907		1906		Pentane	
			1876	NO	15
	1750	1750	1750	N_2O_4	16
	1617	1617	1617	NO_2	8
1465		1464	1465	Pentane	4
1383		1383	1385	Pentane	4
1345		1346	1346	Pentane	4
1311		1311	1310	Pentane	4
1261	1261	1261	1261	Pentane, N_2O_4	4,16
1140		1139	1139	Pentane	4
1074		1074	1075	Pentane	4

TABLE 6. Frequencies (cm^{-1})* and Assignment for the Infrared Bands
Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Pentane and NO_2
(cont'd)

Pentane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
1029		1029	1029	Pentane	4
915		915	916	Pentane	4
864		862	862	Pentane	4
	758	758		NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
	755	755	755	NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
	750	750	750	NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
	747	748	748	NO_2 , N_2O_4	8,16
739	742	741	742	NO_2 , N_2O_4	4,8,16
				Pentane	
733			733	Pentane	4
728		728	729	Pentane	4

* Only fundamentals and major bands in the region from $3500\text{--}500\text{ cm}^{-1}$
are listed.

TABLE 7. Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Nitration of Isobutane with NO₂

Retention Time	Area	Area %	Ratio %	Probable Identification	Amount Torr*
3.869	7123714	2.24	2.49	More than 1 component	
3.976	1208879	0.38	0.42	1-propene	
4.087	2.8593E8	89.96	100.00	Isobutane	
4.177	13751785	4.33	4.81	2-methylpropene	
4.764	3313667	1.04	1.16	Acetone	
5.780	896764	0.28	0.31	Nitromethane	1.6
6.533	217142	0.07	0.08	??	
8.857	579598	0.18	0.2	2-nitropropane	0.6
10.064	3561312	1.12	1.25	2-methyl-2-nitropropane	2.5
11.475	1248439	0.39	0.44	1-nitro-2-methylpropane	0.1

* Conditions employed in this reaction were: isobutane pressure, 350 torr; NO₂ pressure, 25 torr; laser line, P(40) of (00⁰1) - (00⁰0); laser power, 100 W/cm²; irradiation time, 60 sec. The estimated amounts of nitroparaffin products, except 2-nitrobutane, are based on calibration of the instrument response when known pressures of these components were placed in the reaction cell and injected through the gas sampling loop. The pressure of 2-nitrobutane produced is estimated based on the calibration of 1-nitrobutane.

TABLE 8. Frequencies (cm^{-1}) and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Isobutane and NO_2

Isobutane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
3388-3163		3388-3163	3388-3163 3060	Isobutane	
Offscal	2918	Offscale	Offscale		
Offscale	2890	Offscale	Offscale		
2840-2372		2840-2369	2840-2504	Isobutane	
			2348	CO_2	14
2285		2285	2285	Isobutane	9
2177		2177	2176	Isobutane	9
			2173-2082	CO	14
1973		1974	1973	Isobutane	9
			1876	NO	15
1828		1823		Isobutane	9
	1750	1750	1746	N_2O_4	16
			1717	Isobutane ?	18
			1700		
			1696		
			1685		
			1675		
			1653		
	1617	1617	1617	NO_2	8
1477		1476	1480	Isobutane	9
1411		1410	1409	Isobutane	9

TABLE 8. Frequencies (cm^{-1}) and Assignment for the Infrared Bands
Observed in the Laser-Induced Reaction of Isobutane and NO_2
(cont'd)

Isobutane	$\text{NO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
1396		1396	1396	Isobutane	9
1376		1379	1381	Isobutane	9
1334		1334	1334	Isobutane	9
1326		1326	1326	Isobutane	9
	1261	1261	1261	N_2O_4	16
			1216	Acetone	19
1174		1174	1174	Isobutane	9
			1105		
924		924	925	Isobutane	9
909		912	911	Isobutane	9
			890	Isobutene	18
	758				
	755	~ 755			
	750	~ 750	~ 750	$\text{NO}_2\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$	8,16
	747				
	742				

TABLE 9. Summary of GC-MS Data from the Analysis of the Products of the Laser-Induced Decomposition of t-butylinitrite Using Isobutane as a Sensitizer*.

Retention Time	Area	Area %	Ratio %	Probable Identification
3.827	4394204	1.50	1.70	More than 1 component
3.933	1608272	0.55	0.62	1-propene ?
4.043	2.5857E8	88.25	100.00	Isobutane
4.132	6629786	2.26	2.56	2-methylpropene
4.199	1759781	0.60	0.68	??
4.512	159017	0.05	0.06	??
4.703	17763940	6.06	6.87	Acetone
5.081	870249	0.30	0.34	2-methyl-2-propanol (impurity in t-butylinitrite)
5.570	705918	0.24	0.27	t-butylinitrite
9.088	358155	0.17	0.14	??
9.123	180050	0.06	0.07	??

* Conditions employed in this reaction were: Isobutane pressure, 300 torr; t-butylinitrite pressure, 11 torr; laser line, P(40) of (00⁰1) - (00⁰0); laser power, 100 W/cm²; irradiation time, 60 sec.

TABLE 10. Frequencies (cm^{-1}) and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Decomposition of t-butylinitrite Using Isobutane as a Sensitizer

Isobutane	t-butylinitrite	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
3388		3389	3388	Isobutane	
3332		3332	3332	Isobutane	
	3278	3277		t-butylinitrite	10
3223-3163		3223-3162	3221-3163	Isobutane	
			3140-3108	Methane	20
Offscale	2989	Offscale	Offscale		10
2840-2504		2840-2504	2840-2504	Isobutane	9
	2464	2464		t-butylinitrite	10
	2422	2421		t-butylinitrite	10
2372-1973		2369-1977	2369-1977	Isobutane	9
			1876	NO	15
1828		1828		Isobutane	9
			1740	Acetone	19
			1725	Acetone	19
	1663	1663		t-butylinitrite	10
			~ 1653w		
1477	1472	1479	1479	Isobutane	9
1411					
1396	1398	1396	1396	Isobutane + t-butylinitrite	9,10
1376	1375	1375	1375	Isobutane + t-butylinitrite	9,10
1334		1334	1335	Isobutane	9

TABLE 10. Frequencies (cm^{-1}) and Assignment for the Infrared Bands Observed in the Laser-Induced Decomposition of t-butyl nitrite Using Isobutane as a Sensitizer (cont'd)

Isobutane	t-butyl nitrite	Mixture Before Irradiation	Mixture After Irradiation	Identity	Ref.
1326		1326	1327	Isobutane	9
			1305	Methane	20
	1256	1256		t-butyl nitrite	10
			1217	Acetone	19
	1205	1206		t-butyl nitrite	10
	1201				
1174		1174	1174	Isobutane	9
			~1096	Acetone	19
			1061	Isobutene	18
	1039	10		t-butyl nitrite	10
			1033		
	952	952		t-butyl nitrite	10
924	920	926	926	Isobutane + t-butyl nitrite	9,10
909		914	912	Isobutane	9
			890	Isobutene	18
	810	811		t-butyl nitrite	10
	763	764		t-butyl nitrite	10

TABLE 11. Comparison of Nitroalkane Products from Laser-Induced Nitrations to Thermally-Induced²² Nitrations.

<u>Hydrocarbon</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Mole %</u>	
		<u>Thermal[†]</u>	<u>Laser-Induced</u>
Propane	Nitromethane	22.0 (32.3)	32
	Nitroethane	16.6 (24.2)	17
	1-nitropropane	13.2 (24.2)	15
	2-nitropropane	48.2 (19.3)	36
Butane	Nitromethane	10.5	14
	Nitroethane	15.8	18
	1-nitropropane	5.3	6
	1-nitrobutane	24.2	11
	2-nitrobutane	44.2	51
Pentane	Nitromethane	2.3	*Not determined
	Nitroethane	10.9	17
	1-nitropropane	16.7	11
	1-nitrobutane	12.8	0
	1-nitropentane	18.9	13
	2-nitropentane	18.2	40
	3-nitropentane	20.2	19
Isobutane	Nitromethane	(5.8)	28
	2-nitropropane	(23.1)	10
	2-methyl-2-nitropropane	99.0 (7.0)	43
	2-methyl-1-nitropropane	(64.1)	19

Ref. 22. H. B. Hass and H. Shechter, Ind. Eng. Chem. **39**, 817 (1947) and references therein.

[†] The temperatures used in the thermally-induced nitrations (Ref. 17 above), were as follows: Propane: 505-10⁰C for first set of numbers; 790-50⁰C for numbers in parentheses. Butane: 420⁰C. Pentane: 400⁰C. Isobutane: 150⁰C for first set of numbers; 420⁰C for numbers in parentheses.

* An impurity of the pentane sample obscured any chromatographic peak from nitromethane.

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